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The International Week

The UN Commission for Indonesia launched its efforts to resolve the impasse barring a round table Hague Conference on an Indonesian settlement. In the UN, the Western Powers again refused to act on the Soviet proposal for appointing a Governor of the Free Territory of Trieste. A projected secret armistice agreement between Transjordan and Israel will, at the expense of additional Arab concessions, further round out the pattern of military stabilization in Palestine.

Prospects for the GA Session

The major issues likely to feature the forthcoming second half of the 1948 General Assembly are the Italian colonies, the Spanish case and a probable Soviet attack on the Atlantic Pact. Disposition of the Italian colonies is the only really substantive question, the others being important chiefly as propaganda contests. In addition, the Assembly will also deal with discrimination against Indians in South Africa, Israeli membership, which should win a perusal, and probably the Mindszenty case. Some UN members will seek a resolution condemning such satellite acts as Mindszenty's conviction as a violation of human rights, while the USSR will counter with similar charges against the West.

The Atlantic Pact: The GA will almost certainly witness a sharp Soviet propaganda assault on the Atlantic Pact as an aggressive move threatening the peace and undermining the UN. While it is uncertain whether the USSR will raise this issue separately by introducing a condemnatory resolution or will deal with it in the course of the discussion on Spain or the Italian colonies, the USSR has previously introduced specific resolutions as a means of focussing attention on its propaganda themes and therefore appears more likely to follow this course. Although the Soviet case is not a strong one and faces certain Assembly defeat, it will probably be useful for domestic consumption in portraying the USSR as a defender of the UN and will further trouble the souls of those Western elements which somewhat unrealistically think the UN can be the sole bulwark of world peace.

Spain: Should the Spanish case come up at this GA session concurrently with a Soviet attack on the Atlantic Pact, the result is likely to be a major propaganda battle highly embarrassing to the US. Despite Poland's shrewd attempt to withdraw its proposal to reaffirm and strengthen the 1947 Franco resolution of 1946, the Latin American states, anxious to raise the

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ban against chiefs of missions in Madrid and Spanish participation in UN Specialized Agencies, may well seek to retain the issue on the agenda. Should the Latin Americans propose an easing of the ban -- a move which would be generally interpreted as US-inspired -- the USSR would have an ideal opportunity to condemn this as a preliminary step toward admitting Spain to the Atlantic Pact. Such a linking of Spain to the Pact at the critical time prior to its ratification will offend liberal opinion in the US and particularly in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the temper of the Assembly is such that if the question comes up, some alleviation of the 1946 resolution is probable.

Italian colonies: Because of the numerous possible solutions and the multitude of conflicting interests, it is impossible to predict the outcome of the GA voting on the Italian colonies, particularly Libya. Return of Somalia to Italy under a UN trusteeship seems fairly certain, however, while the US-UK position ceding the major portion of Eritrea to Ethiopia should also secure sufficient votes for passage. Nevertheless, considerable pressure is being exerted to obtain strong guarantees protecting Italian colonists and property; Italian lobbying on Eritrea may be sufficiently effective to make the vote on this colony very close.

Disposition of Libya remains the major problem. Approval of a British trusteeship over Cyrenaica appears likely, although there will be an effort to tie the resolution of this issue to that on Tripolitania. For this area, there are four possible alternatives: (1) Italian trusteeship; (2) US trusteeship; (3) multi-power trusteeship; and (4) postponement. While the USSR will probably revive its appeal for direct UN trusteeship and may even propose independence, it is unlikely that the Soviet stand will have much effect on the GA vote. Italian trusteeship is supported by France, some Western European states and most of the Latin American nations, and its appeal is strengthened by Italian participation in the Atlantic Pact and projects for European unity. Without US-UK support, however, this solution cannot be carried, particularly since it might involve a strong local reaction. The UK has again raised the question of US trusteeship which the local Arabs apparently prefer next to independence. Accompanied by probable guarantees of self-government and eventual independence, such a solution might satisfy the Middle and Far Eastern states, but certainly not the Soviet bloc nor even France which would fear the effect on its own North African colonies. A more likely solution would be a multi-power trusteeship for Tripolitania, which, although administratively cumbersome, would probably offer the most universal appeal. Should a stalemate develop over these three solutions, the GA might vote to postpone the question until its fall session. In view of the desire of some pro-Italian Latin American states to use Cyrenaica as a bargaining point for Italian return to Tripolitania, they might insist on postponing disposition of all Libya or including all of it in any multilateral trusteeship.

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✓ Indians in South Africa: It is unlikely that anything beyond an innocuous recommendation will result from GA consideration of the status of the Indians of South Africa. Both the Indian and South African attitudes remain unyielding and diametrically opposed despite US and UK efforts to effect some arbitration or compromise. The Malan Government's threatened withdrawal from the UN, if pushed on the Indian question, will probably not materialize since such action would jeopardize South African hopes for a US loan to ease its economic difficulties.

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WFTU seeks to broaden representation from Western nations. The Communist leadership of the WFTU, conscious that the federation may lose additional national affiliates in the near future, will attempt to restore the national distribution of seats existing before the British-US-Dutch withdrawal by placing on its Executive Bureau leftwing unionists from each of these Western countries. The importance which the WFTU leadership attaches to retaining a facade of representation from non-Communist areas is indicated by its discouragement of recent Czech efforts to let satellite representatives occupy the vacated seats. This trend is further reflected in the decisions to begin organization of WFTU trade departments as soon as possible and to include Australian and Chinese representatives on the large WFTU delegation shortly departing for the Middle and Far East. The WFTU appears to attach particular significance to the trade departments as a means of increasing the participation of Western labor elements. This is shown by its designation of a Deputy WFTU Secretary-General to draw individual craft unions into the federation, regardless of whether or not their international unions are members. The first trades to be brought under the wing of the now completely Soviet-controlled WFTU will be: the miners (meeting in Belgium), the metal workers (in Italy), the textile workers (in France), and the leather workers (in Czechoslovakia).

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Notes

Vietnam may apply for ECAFE membership. The local Vietnam representative at Bangkok reportedly will apply for membership in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East at its current meeting. No action will be taken since this is merely a technical committee meeting rather than a plenary session. The USSR, however, may seize the opportunity for making political capital of the issue.

Bland bill. Sharp objections have been raised by several ERP countries, particularly the UK and Scandinavia, over the proposed Bland bill requiring that 50% of all US-financed cargoes be carried in US bottoms. These nations point out clearly that the effect will be to increase the cost of ERP, involve a basic US departure from its position favoring non-discrimination in international trade, and seriously hamper the recovery of the vital European shipping industry.

Export control. US trade restrictions against Eastern Europe will come under further attack both at the coming GATT meeting in Annecy and at the next ECE session in Geneva. At Annecy, Czechoslovakia, the only Eastern European GATT member, will wield the cudgels, while at Geneva the USSR itself will be present to join in the attack.